Parent Responses to Bullying

The response by parents/guardians can be broken down to two key areas

- Support one’s child: supporting one’s child when they learn of a bullying incident includes:
  - Listen to your child
    - If they won’t share about it, ask them questions to gather as much information about the situation as possible
  - Believe your child
  - Inform your child it is not their fault: Do not blame your child
    - Even if your child struggles socially, they are not to blame for any bullying
  - Ask your child what they want to do about it: They should be part of the solution
    - It empowers your child, which they were denied in the bullying situation
  - Expand the positive interaction you spend with your child
    - Always encourage your child to share how they feel with you
    - Check in continually with your child about how they are feeling
  - Empower your child outside of school
    - Enroll your child in activities that will enhance their self esteem
  - For example, many Martial Arts programs enhance this

- Report the incident: Inform your child’s teacher/school
  Remember, your child’s school has an interest in the safety of your child, as it helps with the education of all students.
  - Let your child be part of the decision of how to approach/deal with the situation
  - Ask the school questions about what is going to be done
    - Also ask to be informed of the changes and/or progress concerning the situation
    - Be patient with the process
  - Work with the school to help educate your child about good ways to respond to bullying in the future
    - Educate child on reporting procedures
    - Safe areas, rooms, teachers, etc.
  - Work with the school to get your child involved with student groups at school that will be accepting of all people (The school should have a list)
  - Become involved with the school to a greater degree
    - Develop a working relationship with the school and your child’s teacher
  - If the school has identified that it is not an issue, have them put that in writing to you

DO NOT:

- Confront the bully or the bullies parents
- Blame the child
- Minimize, rationalize or explain away the situation
- Attempt to solve the problem without your child’s input
- Inform your child that they should fight back